



Spring Fisheries Survey Summary Deer Lake, Sawyer County, 2014

The Hayward DNR Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on Deer Lake on May 6, 2014 targeting northern pike, black crappie, and yellow perch. Six nets were set for one night with one net being compromised. Quality, preferred, and memorable sizes referenced in this summary are based on standard proportions of world record lengths developed for each species by the American Fisheries Society.

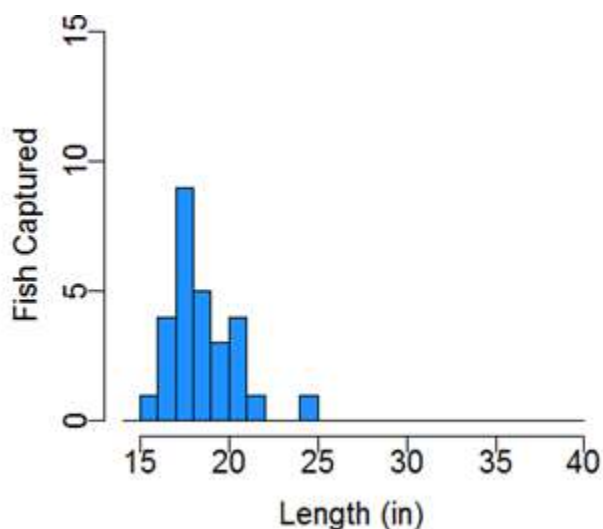
Description of Habitat and Survey Conditions

Deer Lake is generally very shallow with only about 5% of the surface area of the lake having greater depth than 15 feet. This makes the lake very prone to winterkill. A winterkill was observed as the ice came off the lake in the spring of 2014. It appeared to affect all species present in the lake. Therefore, this survey documents what remained.

Northern Pike



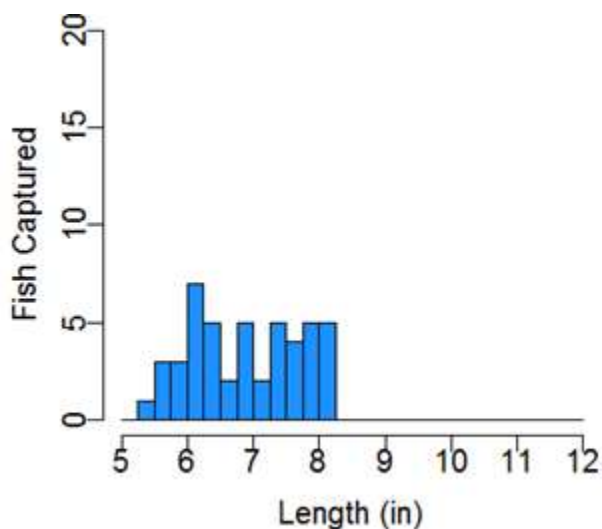
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|---|----|
| Captured 5 per net-night ≥ 14 inches | |
| Quality Size ≥ 21 " | 7% |
| Preferred Size ≥ 28 " | 0% |



Yellow Perch



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|--|-----|
| Captured 8 per net-night ≥ 5 inches | |
| Quality Size ≥ 8 " | 11% |
| Preferred Size ≥ 10 " | 0% |



Summary of Results

Northern pike were captured at a relatively low rate and with few quality size fish. The pike were in noticeably poor condition at the time of the survey. While pike are relatively tolerant of low winter oxygen conditions, low oxygen and perhaps also lack of preferred prey appears to be limiting this population from being appealing to anglers. Historical reports indicate that at different points in time the lake has temporarily supported larger pike.

Yellow perch were captured at a moderate to low rate with a handful of quality size individuals. As it currently exists, this population would not provide much of an angling opportunity.

No black crappie were captured during this survey despite the species being present in the lake. It is possible that the winterkill was particularly hard on crappie. Bullheads, on the other hand, were present in overwhelming numbers. We counted over 1,000 bullhead in every net set. This was not surprising given their ability to tolerate low oxygen conditions.

The chronic winterkill status of this lake appears to be preventing it from providing a fishery that would have much appeal to anglers. Aeration is a possible solution but would require both funding and cooperation from shoreline landowners. Even such, there is no guarantee that an aeration project could override the winter kills in this lake.



A net full of black bullheads from Deer Lake. This was by far the most abundant species appearing in the 2014 survey.

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